

of ideas, and its champions in the last half of the century laboured it the more, precisely because they knew that it must be conveyed to their audiences by teaching and preaching or not at all. Of those champions the most learned, the most practical, and the most persuasive was Richard Baxter.

How Baxter endeavoured to give practical instruction to his congregation at Kidderminster, he himself has told us. " Every Thursday evening my neighbours that were most desirous and had opportunity met at my house, and there one of them repeated the sermon, and afterwards they proposed what doubts any of them had about the sermon, or any other case of conscience, and I resolved their doubts." ^{6fl} Both in form and in matter, his *Christian Directory, or a Summ of Practical Theologie and Cases of Conscience*^a is a remarkable book. It is, in essence, a Puritan *Summa Theologica* and *Summa Moralis* in one ; its method of treatment descends directly from that of the mediaeval *Summa*> and it is, perhaps, the last important English specimen of a famous *genus*. Its object, as Baxter explains in his introduction, is " the resolving of practical cases of conscience, and the reducing of theoretical know-ledge into serious Christian practice." Divided into four parts, Ethics, Economics, Ecclesiastics, and Politics, it has as its purpose to establish the rules of a

Christian casuistry, which may be sufficiently
detailed
and precise to afford practical guidance to
the proper
conduct of men in the different
relations of life,
as lawyer, physician, schoolmaster,
soldier, master
and servant, buyer and seller, landlord and
tenant,
lender and borrower, ruler and subject.
Part of its
material is derived from the treatment of
similar
questions by previous writers, both before
and after
the Reformation, and Baxter is conscious of
continuing
a great tradition. But it is, above all things,
realistic,
and its method lends plausibility to the
suggestion that
it originated in an attempt to answer
practical questions